

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 IO-13 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15

L-03 INR-07 CIAE-00 OIC-02 /058 W
----- 033562

R 021242Z OCT 76

FM AMEMBASSY QUITO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1797

INFO AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL

C O N F I D E N T I A L QUITO 7139

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, OAS, EC

SUBJECT: OAS CHARTER REFORM

REF: STATE 197847

1. SUMMARY. EMBOFF DISCUSSED USG POSITIONS CONTAINED REFTTEL WITH MFA DIRECTOR OF OAS AFFAIRS, DR. ULPIANO LOPEZ, ON SEPTEMBER 30. LOPEZ INDICATED THE GOE WOULD PREFER A SINGLE OAS SPECIAL GA TO DISCUSS COOPERATION FOR DEVELOPMENT AND CHARTER REFORM. HE ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT THE GOE IS WILLING TO BE FLEXIBLE ON THIS SUBJECT. HE EXPRESSED CONCERN WHETHER IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO FIT TWO SPECIAL GAS IN BEFORE THE SEVENTH REGULAR GA SCHEDULED FOR JUNE 1977. HE REACTED NEGATIVELY TO SUGGESTION OF HIGH-LEVEL REVIEW OF CHARTER REFORM PRIOR TO A SPECIAL GA. END SUMMARY

2. IN RESPONSE TO EMBOFF'S EXPLANATION OF USG POSITION ON SEPARATING COOPERATION FOR DEVELOPMENT AND CHARTER REFORM, DR. LOPEZ SAID THAT THE GOE'S GENERAL POSITION HAS BEEN TO FAVOR A SINGLE GA TO DISCUSS BOTH SUBJECTS. THIS POSITION, HE SAID, IS BASED ON GOE VIEW THAT THE TWO ISSUES ARE CLOSELY CONNECTED. HE ALSO EXPRESSED DOUBTS WHETHER TWO SPECIAL GAS COULD BE HELD BEFORE THE SEVENTH REGULAR GA, NOW SCHEDULED FOR JUNE 1977. DR. LOPEZ SAID THAT GOVERNMENTS ARE STILL PREPARING THEIR VIEWS ON THE COOPERATION FOR DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS AND THAT THE PER-
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MANENT COUNCIL WOULD PROBABLY NOT BE ABLE TO BEGIN CON-

SIDERING THAT ISSUE BEFORE NOVEMBER. SINCE "NOBODY WORKS IN DECEMBER," THE SPECIAL GA ON COOPERATION FOR DEVELOPMENT COULD NOT BE HELD BEFORE JANUARY. THUS THERE WOULD BE THREE GAS WITHIN A SPACE OF SIX MONTHS.

3. DR. LOPEZ, HOWEVER, INDICATED THAT HE WAS AWARE OF USG OPPOSITION TO COMBINING COOPERATION FOR DEVELOPMENT AND CHARTER REFORM IN THE SAME SPECIAL GA, AND THAT THE IDEA IS THUS DOOMED TO FAILURE. HE INDICATED THAT THE GOE IS FLEXIBLE ON THIS SUBJECT AND IS WILLING TO GO ALONG WITH THE IDEA OF SEPARATE ASSEMBLIES, KEEPING IN MIND THE TIME PROBLEM. EMBOFF THEN OUTLINED USG SUGGESTIONS THAT CHARTER REFORM SHOULD BE REVIEWED BY A HIGH-LEVEL GROUP OF EXPERTS PRIOR TO CONVENING THE SPECIAL GA. DR. LOPEZ FOUND TWO PROBLEMS WITH THIS SUGGESTION. FIRST, IT WOULD AGGRAVATE THE TIME PROBLEM EVEN MORE. SECOND, HE THOUGHT "HIGH-LEVEL EXPERTS" WOULD IN MOST CASE TURN OUT TO BE OAS AMBASSADORS AND MFA EXPERTS. AT THE MOST, THEY WOULD BE FOREIGN MINISTERS WHO WOULD IN TURN RELY FOR ADVISE ON THOSE SAME OAS ADVISORS. THUS, HE SAID, THE PEOPLE MAKING POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS AT A MEETING OF HIGH-LEVEL EXPERTS WOULD BE THOSE WHO WOULD DO SO AT A GA.

4. IN GENERAL DR. LOPEZ WAS RELATIVELY OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THE FUTURE OF BOTH COOPERATION FOR DEVELOPMENT AND CHARTER REFORM. WITH REGARD TO THE FORMER, HE THOUGHT THE US HAD GAINED MUCH FAVOR BY OUR ACTIVE SUPPORT FOR AN IDEA ORIGINALLY RAISED BY PANAMA TO EMBARRASS US. ON THE LATER, HE NOTED THAT AT LEAST CHARTER REFORM IS NOW BEING DISCUSSED RATIONALLY. HE ALSO NOTED THAT SOME OF THE RADICAL POSITIONS IN LATIN AMERICA SEEM TO BE SOFTENING.

5. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH DR. LOPEZ DOES NOT MAKE HIGH-LEVEL POLICY DECISIONS, HE IS THE MFA'S RESIDENT EXPERT ON OAS AFFAIRS, AND HIS STATEMENT THAT THE GOE IS NOT WEDDED TO A SINGLE SPECIAL GA PROBABLY REFLECTS CURRENT GOE POLICY. ON THE OTHER HAND, HIS COMMENTS ON HIGH-LEVEL EXPERTS SEEM TO REFLECT A FEAR THAT HE WOULD BE LEFT OUT OF ANY SUCH DISCUSSIONS. IT IS UNLIKELY THAT ECUADOR WOULD STRONGLY OPPOSE A HIGH-LEVEL EXPERT REVIEW OF CHARTER REFORM IF

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OTHER LA STATES ARE WILLING TO GO ALONG ALSO. LOPEZ' COMMENTS ON LACK OF TIME FOR THREE GAS SEEM TO HAVE SOME SUBSTANCE.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLICIES, REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 02 OCT 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: blochd0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976QUITO07139
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760372-0892
From: QUITO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761090/aaaaczui.tel
Line Count: 111
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 STATE 197847
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: blochd0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22 JUL 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <22 JUL 2004 by SmithRJ>; APPROVED <29 OCT 2004 by blochd0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: OAS CHARTER REFORM
TAGS: PFOR, EC, US, OAS
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006